

Sonia Sotomayor, Supreme Court Justice



*Until we get equality in education,
we won't have an equal society.*

1 From the time Sonia Sotomayor was a little girl, she had a dream of being a judge. Through education and hard work, this dream has come true.

2 Sonia Sotomayor was born in the Bronx, a part of New York City, on June 25, 1954. Her family lived in an apartment just a few miles from Yankee Stadium. Her aunts, uncles, and grandmother lived near Sonia. The family spent time together on the weekends watching movies and playing bingo.

3 As a girl, Sonia loved to read. Books from *The Nancy Drew Series* were her favorite books to read. She loved solving the mysteries in the books and dreamed of becoming a police officer or detective.

4 When Sonia was eight, she was diagnosed with Type I diabetes. People that have this condition must take insulin daily to stay healthy. For Sonia, this meant having to take insulin shots. Her parents argued about who would give the shots to her. Sonia did not like hearing the arguments, so she decided to give the shots to herself.

5 Sonia was told that her dream of being a police officer was not a good idea. (Today, thanks to advancements in medicine, people with diabetes can be police officers). Sonia still wanted an exciting job, though. One of her favorite television shows was *Perry Mason*, a mystery show that focused on a lawyer who solved cases. Sonia decided that a career in law would be her new dream. But she didn't want to be a lawyer; she wanted to be a judge.

6 In order for Sonia to achieve her dream, she knew that she needed to do well in school. She worked hard to learn English since Spanish was her home language. When she didn't know how to study, she asked a classmate. When she needed help in school, she asked her teachers. Her hard work and

determination paid off. When she graduated high school, she went to Princeton University, one of the top schools in the nation. She earned a degree in History, and then went to Yale University for Law School.

7 Sonia became a lawyer in 1979. Her first job was being an assistant district attorney in Manhattan. It was a difficult job and Sonia often worked twelve hour days. In 1984, Sonia decided to leave this job and join a private law firm. Most of the cases she worked on dealt with counterfeiting handbags and jewelry.

8 Then, in 1992, Sonia's dream of becoming a judge came true. She was appointed to the U.S District Court for the Southern District of New York. She was the first Hispanic federal judge in New York. While she was a judge in this district, she heard over 400 cases. One of the cases she ruled on was the 1994 baseball strike.

9 In 1998, Sonia began a new job as a judge. She was appointed as a judge on the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. During her time as a judge, she heard over 3,000 cases.

10 Then in 2009, President Barack Obama nominated Sonia as Supreme Court Judge. Sonia became the third woman to become a judge on the Supreme Court and the first Hispanic.

11 Even though Sonia is busy as a Supreme Court judge, she still has time to do other things. She has written several books. She loves watching baseball, especially her favorite team, the Yankees. She speaks to Latino students because she wants to inspire them to follow their dreams. She also speaks to children with diabetes to encourage them to manage their disease and stay healthy.

Name: _____

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1. What caused Sonia to change her dream of becoming a detective to a judge?

2. How does paragraph 3 relate to paragraph 11?

3. What actions showed that Sonia was committed to her dream of becoming a judge?

4. What inference can you make from the following details?

She speaks to Latino students because she wants to inspire them to follow their dreams. She also speaks to children with diabetes to encourage them to manage their disease and stay healthy.
